UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

memorandum

DATE: 5 November 1979

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: Computer Security Sub-Committee

Serial: T4/456/79

SUBJECT: Contractor Sharing of Computers

TO: Chairman, Security Committee

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     The attached memo was prepared by Computer Security Sub-Committee member [____] (CIA) and [_____] (DIA) at my request. The reason for the memo is to alert you to an increasing problem of a single contractor doing work for more than one government agency. Our particular concern is the sharing of computers for multiple contracts, but the general problem of overall security supervisors and general use of physical facilites may be of interest to your committe

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                                 Chairman
            Computer Security Sub-Committee

Encl:
  a/s

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
(REV. 7-76)
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6
5010-112

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD   5 November 1979

SUBJECT: Contractor Sharing of Computers

1.   Numerous contractor organizations utilize ADP equipment for processing and storing SCI information. Traditionally, the approved method for processing such classified material is either to dedicate a computer system to process compartmented data only, or to allocate a specific number of hours on a computer for single compartment processing. The latter method is known as "periods processing" and requires sanitization procedures before and after the dedicated period. Both dedicated and periods processing type operations can degrade the efficiency of the computer resources. They are particularly not cost effective for the contractors if changes in the type of data processed are frequent, or if the machines cannot be utilized full time. For this reason, contractors wish to utilize more economical alternatives for processing data. They are now seeking advice and guidance to achieve eventual system security approval. The problem is compounded when a single contractor utilizes the same ADP system to satisfy contractual obligations for multiple NFIB customers.

2.   The issues, stemming from contractor proposals for alternate data processing methods, relate to regulations, areas of jurisdiction and NFIB resources. First, current regulations are not always sufficiently detailed to provide complete guidance for the different contractor situations. Regulations will be reviewed by the CSS with a view to producing standard contractor ADP security policy for inclusion in DCID 1/16. Secondly, guidelines must be formulated to establish a cognizant computer security authority for each facility where NFIB members share contractor computer facilities. This authority would monitor the operation for security and effectiveness and would be the focal point for arbitration when problems arise. Lastly, the problem of resources must be faced. At present, no single NFIB member has the resources or overall expertise to devote full time effort to resolving the many computer security issues in dealing with the contractors. Therefore, methods for augmenting these resources and reducing unnecessary duplication of effort will be investigated.

3.   This paper is intended to alert SECOM of a trend in the computer processing of SCI data by contractors which requires policy review and will increase the demands upon ADP security resources of the NFIB members. As CSS work progresses and recommendations are developed, the results will be forwarded to SECOM for information and concurrence.

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